GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:1887
ANSWERED ON:05.12.2006
DISCREPANCY IN MERCHANDISE TRADE
Gaikwad Shri Eknath Mahadeo;Mane Smt. Nivedita;Singh Shri Kirti Vardhan

Will the Minister of COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY be pleased to state:

(a) whether huge discrepancy in merchandise trade data has occurred for the year 2005-2006 ;

(b) if so, the details thereof and the reasons therefor;

(c) whether accountability has been fixed in this regard;

(d) if so, the details thereof; and

(e) the measures taken to rectify the data and to prevent recurrence of such lapse?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY(SHRI JAIRAM RAMESH)

(a) to (b): During 2005-06, the merchandise trade data of textiles exports compiled by the Directorate General of Commercial Intellegence (DGCI&S) was found to be under-reported when compared with the data of the US customs and the EU customs. A Committee was set up to re-concile these differences. DGCI&S in coordination with DG(Systems) CBEC undertook the exercise of matching the data received by DGCI&S in the form of Daily Trade Returns (DTRs) with the data entered into the DG (systems) computer network (ICE GATE) from various Customs Houses all over the country. As a result of this exercise, a number of missing records were found in the DGCI&S server. The merchandise trade data for 2005-06 was revised on this basis.

(c) & (d) The present system of collection and compilation of merchandise trade data is in a transition phase. Compared to manual handling of data some years back, presently as much as 85% of trade data is computerised under the Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) system. The missing entries in the data was a systemic problem that has since been rectified. Hence the question of fixing responsibility does not arise.

(e) Measures have been instituted to ensure proper identification and correction of missing entries in the computer data system so as to avoid recurrence of this problem.